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DANIEL 12 : 2, 3.

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I DO not feel at all sure that the last word has been spoken concerning Antiochus Epiphanes and his relations to the book of Daniel and its contents. Fortunately, however, the things that are most important in connection with these two verses do not necessarily depend on the holding of any particular critical view. They do depend, however, on certain facts in the structure of the apocalyptic parts of Daniel, and our investigation must begin with a brief examination of these facts.

In the canonical book of Daniel, as we possess it, are five apocalypses (2 : 27-45, and chaps. 7, 8, 9, 10-12). These purport to be forecasts of the future made by Daniel the prophet in the years 603, 541, 539, 538, and 536 B.C., respectively. The first of these apocalypses is represented as having been publicly uttered before Nebuchadnezzar, while three of the other four were to be kept private (7 : 28 ; 8 : 26 ; 12 : 4). In certain general features the forecast they make is the same. There is to be a succession of world-powers, followed by the setting up of the universal and eternal kingdom of God on the earth. In the publicly uttered first apocalypse no mention is made of Israel in connection with the kingdom, but in all the others the kingdom is Israelite, is directly preceded by dreadful calamities to Israel, and begins with the destruction of the calamity-bringing world-power. There is no explicit claim that this kingdom is one of which earlier prophets have spoken, but it is not easy to doubt that the writer had in mind the eternal throne that had been promised to David, and the universal divine reign which the prophets had connected with that promise.

We need to look at this a little more in detail. The kingdom of God on earth is differently pictured in the five apocalypses in Daniel, but in them all it is unique. In the first we have the stone cut out without hands, smiting in pieces the image which stands for the existing world-power, becoming a great mountain that fills the whole earth, and declared to be a kingdom set up by the God of heaven, with a sovereignty that shall not pass to another people, a kingdom which shall stand forever (Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45). In the second apocalypse we find one of the world-powers especially arrogant, and persecuting the saints, and then an ancient of days, a judgment day with splendid pageantry, one like unto a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, and a kingdom given to him which is supreme over all nations, peoples, and languages, and which shall be eternal. The arrogant world-power is to be destroyed, and the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms, under the whole heaven, given to the people of the saints of the Most High, so given for eternity (Dan. 7:9-14, 22-27). In the third apocalypse the kingdom is spoken of less directly, and less in detail. But it tells of a destroying world-power that will profane the sanctuary and will stand against a captain of captains, while yet the sanctuary will be cleansed and the world-power broken without hand (Dan. 8:14, 25). In the brief apocalyptic part of the fourth apocalypse the kingdom is not explicitly mentioned, but we are told of the desolating of the holy city, to be followed by the pouring of predetermined wrath upon the desolator (Dan. 9:24, 25-27). In the fifth apocalypse, though the apocalyptic details are much fuller than in any of the others, the mention of triumph at its close is relatively brief, and is veiled. Yet we are able to recognize the same characteristic features as in the others. The desolator has been very prominent in the details of the apocalypse. He "shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (11:45). The things spoken of in the apocalypse shall have their final outcome "when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people" (12:7). The angel Michael shall stand up, "the great captain that standeth up for the sons of thy people," and, after

unprecedented troubles, "thy people shall be delivered" (12:1).

It is at this point that the analogy of the other apocalypses comes in to help us in determining the meaning of the climactic verses of the fifth apocalypse. At this point, where the adverse world-power is broken by a power from heaven, all five are alike. Except that the first is naturally silent as to the matter, the five are alike in connecting this power from heaven with the destinies of Israel. At this point the third and fourth apocalypses come to a close, while the first and the second rise to a climax by giving details concerning this power from heaven, representing it as a universal and eternal kingdom. In the place of this we find in the fifth apocalypse a different climax. In the following translation other considerations are sacrificed to the purpose of exhibiting the syntax, and of giving the familiar renderings to certain familiar words :

At that time thy people shall make its escape, every one that shall be found written in the book ; it being also true that there shall awake great numbers from them that sleep in the dusty ground, some to eternal life, and some to reproaches, to eternal abhorrence ; the wise being bright as with the brightness of the firmament, and they that cause great numbers to be righteous [being bright] as the stars eternally and forever. (Dan. 12 : 1b-3.)

The people as a whole is represented as making its escape from the calamities brought upon it by the desolator. Its escape will consist in the escape of such individuals as are written in the book. This will occur at the time when Michael, representing the heavenly power, shall stand up for Israel, and the desolator shall come to an end.—*It being also true, that:* By this connective phrase, I have tried to represent the force of the Hebrew circumstantial clause as here used. The event stated in the following clause is evidently mentioned as having a circumstantial relation to the events mentioned in the preceding clause, but not necessarily a close relation.—*From them that sleep:* The picture is that of great numbers leaving the mass of the sleepers, and joining the body of the awakened ones. It is not necessarily implied that any of the sleepers will fail to awake.—*The dusty ground:* In the Hebrew expression "ground of dust" the

genitive can only be adjectival.—*The wise being bright*, etc. : Another circumstantial clause, the connection with the preceding clause being here evidently a close one.

It is impossible to make of this anything else than a statement of the doctrine of a resurrection quite similar to that found in Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians. Michael will win the victory, there will be escape for the people, and for many of the persons who constitute the people, but how about the others ? How about them ? says our author. For us all alike there is an awakening from the dead. Those who die in the wrong will awake to be forever disgusting ; those who are on the right side will have everlasting life ; those who have been leaders for the right will not only live, but shine everlastingly.

There is another consideration, and for it we return to our comparison of the five apocalypses. They have a common law of historical perspective. In the first apocalypse, for example, we go step by step down the future, till we reach the point where the kingdom set up by God conquers the existing world-kingdom, and then we no longer go by steps, but are in the presence of a movement that is eternal. Precisely the same is true in the second apocalypse. In the fourth we follow the steps in like fashion till we reach the bringing in of eternal righteousness, and in the fifth we again pass suddenly from historical measures of time to the measureless expanse of a life that is eternal. In this the four are alike. We walk a few steps in time, and then leap into eternity. The difference between the fifth and the others is this, that in the others the author conducts us to regions where we see the eternal kingdom in its earlier stages, while in the fifth he causes us to leap over these earlier stages, and shows us that stage where the resurrection and future reward and punishment appear.